

THE *Centenary Year*

by **KJ Dargie**

Planning for the Centenary Year began in earnest with the establishment of a Centenary Committee in July 2002, just over three years before the celebrations began on December 3rd 2005. The diary for 2005/6 was already well filled with golf and social events so it was decided at an early stage that there were to be relatively few special Centenary events and, instead, to rename established calendar events to reflect the celebrations. It was hoped to give every member something in which they could participate and which they would enjoy. There were, however, to be some lasting mementos and for this purpose a new Centenary Crest was created, derived from the original crest which was itself adapted from the Davenport coat of arms. This new crest was to be used on all club stationery, all flags, prizes and club ties. It was also decided to embark on the production of this book recording the history of the club.

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THE COMMITTEE COMPRISED

**K.J. DARGIE – CHAIRMAN,
M.B ALLEN, MRS HAZEL HANKS, MRS AILEEN GREGORY**

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**JOHN BOLT AND HILARY WOODWARD JOINED THE COMMITTEE ON
THEIR RESPECTIVE APPOINTMENTS AS CENTENARY CAPTAIN AND CENTENARY
LADY CAPTAIN WHILE KEITH HANKS WAS CO-OPTED.**

In preparation of the centenary year, a number of actions took place in 2005. On the course, several thousand daffodil bulbs were planted by a volunteer group, the bulbs generously donated by a member. A new copse of trees, known as the Centenary Copse, was planted on the right of the 13th fairway beyond the bunker to change the shape of the hole slightly and to afford added protection to players on the 16th hole. Again, these were paid for by a member.



CENTENARY DAFFODILS AT THE POND ON THE 6TH



THE DAFFODIL PLANTERS

A new wall was constructed over the stream at the side of the 11th tee, modelled on the famous Swilcan Bridge on the 18th fairway of the Old Course, St Andrews. It was designed by a member, Glyn Stockdale, and constructed in a dry wall style by another member, Mick Glynn. The cost was largely met by member donations.



THE CENTENARY WALL AT THE 11TH TEE

When Centenary Day itself, December 3rd 2005, arrived it turned out to be a day of gale force winds and torrential rain in a week which had also seen snow, hail, thunder and lightning. But members of Stockport Golf Club do not let such matters deter them. At precisely 7pm the Captain, John Bolt,

Lady Captain, Hilary Woodward, and President, Mike Whitham, donned waterproofs and bravely battled the elements to raise the Centenary Flag on the flag pole. The President set off a rocket, while the watching crowd of some 150 members clapped from the warmth and comfort of the clubhouse! This was followed by a grand ball, held in a marquee (which just about survived the storms) erected in the car park.



THE CENTENARY FLAG RAISING

Stockport is renowned for the strength of support its members give to club events and this was no exception, with some 380 in attendance. An excellent meal was prepared by Mrs Tina Hill in a field kitchen! The marquee was stunningly decorated under the supervision of Hazel and Keith Hanks, Centenary Committee members. Dancing continued until well into the following day, with music provided by two bands, and the event was judged an outstanding success. Centenary Year had got off to the best possible start.



THE DANCE FLOOR

The club was fortunate enough to receive a number of mementos from well wishers on the occasion of its centenary. The Queen sent a message from Buckingham Palace; the R&A presented the club with a silver salver (see below) while the ELGU sent the Ladies a beautiful plate. Bramhall Park Golf Club gifted a suitably inscribed decanter reflecting the linkage enjoyed over 100 years.



DECANTER GIFTED BY BRAMHALL PARK GC



LETTER FROM HM THE QUEEN



CENTENARY COMMEMORATIVE SALVER AND PLATE FROM THE R&A AND ELGU

On the following weekend the weather, by contrast, could not have been better, with blue skies, warm winter sun and not a breath of wind. Taking advantage of these conditions, 68 members, dressed in clothes reminiscent of 1905 and using hickory-shafted clubs, played a 12-hole mixed competition from a shotgun start. The winning scores for best man and best lady were thought to be excellent, given the rudimentary clubs used, and confirmed just how skilled the best players of 1905 were. Tina Hill acquired a 1905 edition of Mrs Beeton's Book of Household Management and created a celebratory menu for the meal which followed, utilising Mrs Beeton's recipes.



THE 1905 'GOLFERS' IN 2005



THE CENTENARY CAKE DECORATED BY ANDREW DAVIDSON



THE MENU

In January 2006 the gentlemen held their Centenary Dinner. 180 members attended and the highlight of the evening was the presentation to the club of a special silver salver from the Royal and Ancient Golf Club of St Andrews. It was presented by Martin Kippax, Chairman of the R&A Open Championship Committee. In his speech, in which he paid handsome praise to the club, he made particular mention of the excellent administration of the Northern Region Open Qualifying events held over the previous six years at Stockport. The ladies, too, held a special Centenary Dinner in February, attended by a record number of 119 ladies. It was so much enjoyed that the wish was expressed that the dinner should become a regular fixture in the club calendar.

On the playing front, the big event of Centenary Year was the hosting of the Cheshire County Championship. However, not all events were as serious. In May Jeremy Farnworth organised a special fun competition. The 'Snake' involved teams of five (one a non-golfer) playing in sequence with four clubs and a putter the 1st hole, then from the 2nd tee to the 14th green, and from the 11th tee to the 16th green. Three teams teed off at the same time. This was followed by a crazy putting competition in which bricks provided unnatural obstacles to holing out. The winners were the Sanders family and, yet again, an excellent supper was laid on by Tina Hill.

The Centenary golf events had begun in April with a men's competition held jointly with Bramhall Golf Club, also celebrating its Centenary. The Stockport men played their first round at Bramhall, while the Bramhall men played at Stockport. Then both clubs played a second round, this time on their home course. The winner on aggregate was Nick Parker from Bramhall and the Joint Centenary Trophy (a 100 year-old putter) will reside at Bramhall for the year. Thereafter it will be kept at whichever club wins the regular inter-club match each year. The ladies also enjoyed an exchange with Bramhall Ladies and also a Joint Centenary exchange match with the ladies from the delightful Pannal Golf Club, outside Harrogate, whose 18-hole course was, like Stockport's, first laid out by Sandy Herd (although it was later altered by Sir Guy Campbell and Major Charles MacKenzie, Alister's brother).

It was fitting that the Cheshire Championship should come to Stockport in the club's Centenary Year, for Stockport has been an important supporter and member of the Cheshire Union since the Union's foundation in 1921. There was appropriate success for the club - not for the first time - when it won the team event through Jamie Howarth, Ben Kay and David Peel. In the individual championship Howarth finished second with a four-round score of -14, while David Peel finished in third place. More excitement was to follow in the Scratch Gold Medal when Jamie Howarth, on vacation from his golf scholarship at University in Mississippi, known affectionately as Ole Miss, broke the course record with a remarkable 63.

The big social event of the summer was the garden party, expertly conceived and organised by Mike Allen. July 2006 saw an extended period of fabulous weather, but on this occasion the sun refused to shine. It did not dampen the enthusiasm of those who attended, some 500 members, guests and, importantly, children. To welcome the crowds Glyn Stockdale and a friend rode penny-farthing bicycles up and down the entrance drive and music was provided by a 30-piece brass band. There were races for the children, Punch and Judy, various competition stalls, fortune tellers, croquet, chipping and putting. It is an honour and privilege to be Captain in Centenary year, but on this occasion John Bolt sat all afternoon being soaked to the skin as children dislodged a bucket of water over his head by throwing rubber rings. His wife, Linda,

happily sold the rings and raised over £60! The Hills, once again, excelled with marvellous afternoon teas and the real ale and Pimms bars were drunk dry. The consensus was that this was an extremely successful event shared by all the family. Not only is Stockport a sociable, family golf club, but also it knows how to enjoy itself.

The Garden Party



SAM CALLAGHAN - ONE OF THE CLUB'S ELDER STATESMEN TRIES TO IDENTIFY THOSE IN THE PHOTOS



CAPTAIN JOHN BOLT GETTING WET



THE BRASS BAND ENTERTAIN



THIRSTY WORK



FUTURE OLYMPIANS?



THE WELCOMING PENNY FARTHING - GLYN STOCKDALE ON THE RIGHT



THE FUTURE'S BRIGHT...

Happy Birthday

The Club was not alone in celebrating its Centenary during 2006; Lady Life Member, Mrs Vaudry Beere also celebrated her 100th birthday. The picture shows Mrs Beere with the Centenary Captain John Bolt and Centenary Lady Captain Hilary Woodward, after receiving a Centenary Pin Box to mark the happy occasion.



Centenary Golf Champions

Men

1st Division Ian Gemmell
2nd Division Steve Hartley

Each was presented with a special silver salver and Steve became the first winner of the Centenary Trophy, generously donated by Glyn Stockdale.

Ladies

Silver Division Linda Bolt
Bronze Division Gail Brady

Each received a specially inscribed silver pill box and Gail became the first winner of the Ladies Centenary Trophy.

Mixed

The winners were Peter McCulloch and Mrs Jackie Findlay who were presented with appropriate prizes.

Juniors

The winner was Steve Townend who received a salver inscribed with the Centenary Crest.